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Director

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**MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING AND PUBLIC HEARINGS  
NEWTON HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

**DATE:** September 26, 2013

**PLACE/TIME:** City Hall, Room 202  
7:30 p.m.

**ATTENDING:** Donald Lang, Chair  
William Roesner, Member  
Rodney Barker, Member  
See Attendance List

Alfred Wojciechowski, Member  
Nancy Grissom, Member  
Brian Lever, Staff

**ABSENT:** David Morton, Member  
Donald Tellalian, Alternate  
Leonard Sherman, Alternate

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. with Donald Lang presiding as Chair. Voting permanent members were Lang, Wojciechowski, Roesner, Grissom, and Barker. Brian Lever acted as recording secretary and the meeting was digitally recorded.

**72-80 Ober Road – Preservation Restriction Review**

Pamela Fife, President of the Bigelow House Association, Dick Cooper from Sentry Property Management, and roofer Paul Lynch presented an application to replace the roof on the building. Staff stated that this building consists of a small condominium complex in Oak Hill. It is listed on the National Register and was originally designed by H.H. Richardson as a summer residence for Dr. Henry Bigelow, then expanded into the Peabody School for Crippled Children School, and finally abandoned in the 1970's. In the 1980's the City, numerous citizens, the Newton Historical Commission and This Old House collaborated to turn it into condominiums with a preservation restriction placed on the property. This Old House removed the existing asphalt shingle roof and replaced it with a cedar shingle roof. The present cedar roof is nearing the end of its usefulness and numerous shingles have curled. The condominium complex would like to replace the roof with asphalt shingles. The preservation restriction does not specifically call out roof material as an item that falls under Commission purview; only "roof profile" is mentioned. Fife stated that the cedar shingle roof installed in 1980 had substantially deteriorated and had been repaired several times. Fife further stated that replacing the roof with cedar shingles would be a financial hardship costing a \$100,000 more than asphalt shingles. Wojciechowski stated that a properly installed cedar roof should last longer than 30 years and that it appeared the roof was installed incorrectly. Roesner stated that moisture likely built up from lack of airflow and deteriorated the shingles. Roesner expressed support for reusing cedar

shingles for the roof material. Fife stated that they were considering GAF timberline shingles colored weathered wood. Wojciechowski motioned to approve the application with Barker seconding.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on September 26, 2013 the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 4-1,

**RESOLVED** to approve the proposed roof replacement of existing cedar shingles with asphalt shingles at 72-80 Ober Road as submitted with the recommendation that the applicant work with staff regarding a color selection for the proposed roof.

Voting in the Affirmative:

**Donald Lang, Chair**

**Alfred Wojciechowski, Member**

**Nancy Grissom, Member**

**Rodney Barker, Member**

Voting in the Negative:

**William Roesner, Member**

**57 Metacomet Road – Demolition Review**

Future property owner Robert Murray presented an application to demolish the residence. Staff stated that this 1919 Colonial Revival residence is located in a Waban neighborhood with other early 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings. The architect for this building was Harry Morton Ramsay, a Boston based architect who designed several buildings in Newton including nearby 45 Metacomet Road. The first owners were George and Edith Gosman. George worked as a doctor. The existing building has suffered some deterioration of the wood trim and windows, but retains its original features including, windows, trim, brick façade, and slate roof. The surrounding neighborhood context consists of other Colonial Revival style residences as well as Tudor style residences. The building contributes to an early 20<sup>th</sup> century architectural context. Murray stated that he had originally intended to renovate and add onto the building, but after examining the deterioration caused by roof leaks as well as an oil leak, he determined that renovation would not be economically feasible. Lang recommended that renovation and constructing an addition be reexamined. Staff presented a letter in support of preserving the building from Varda and Neal Farber. Varda and Neal Farber also spoke expressing support for the preservation of the building. Dr. Katz at 1865 Beacon Street spoke in favor of preserving the building. Isabelle Albeck at 240 Windsor Road also spoke in favor of preserving the building. Commission members expressed support for preserving the building. Barker motioned to find the building preferably preserved with Roesner seconding.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on September 26, 2013 the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 5-0,

**RESOLVED** to find the residence at 57 Metacomet Road preferably preserved.

Voting in the Affirmative:

**Donald Lang, Chair**

**William Roesner, Member**

**Alfred Wojciechowski, Member**

**Nancy Grissom, Member**

**Rodney Barker, Member**

**19 Maynard Street – Demolition Review**

Property owner Karen Li and builder Tom Frangos presented an application to demolish the residence. Staff stated that this 1953 Ranch style residence is located in a West Newton neighborhood of similar Ranch buildings. The first owners were John and Ethel Farrington. John worked as an engineer. The architect for the building was Ralph I. Williams and the building was constructed by Campanelli Homes, a development company founded in 1947, which is responsible for most of the Ranch development in this

neighborhood. The building appears to have had few alterations aside from replacement windows. The roof has some deterioration in roof shingles. The surrounding neighborhood has a strong Ranch architectural context. Though some buildings have been replaced and others altered, the overall character of the neighborhood remains. The neighborhood was surveyed as part of a post-WW II historic architecture study in Newton, which included the housing development on Maynard Street. In the past few years the Historical Commission reviewed the demolition of 10 Maynard Street and 42 Maynard Street, neither building had a demolition delay imposed. Li stated that the building had water and sewerage issues and that tenants had been running a dog business out of the building without her permission. Frangos stated that the building was on slab without a basement and was not well constructed. Bill Blanchfield of 9 Mosman Street stated that the Ranch buildings in the area contribute to the feeling of a neighborhood and was opposed to the demolition. Wojciechowski stated that he felt the building contributed to the neighborhood's architectural context and supported preservation. Roesner stated that he felt the building did not warrant preservation. Grissom noted that previously the Commission had permitted demolition without delay in this neighborhood. Barker motioned to find the building preferably preserved with Wojciechowski seconding.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on September 26, 2013 the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 3-2,

**RESOLVED** to find the residence at 19 Maynard Street preferably preserved.

Voting in the Affirmative:

**Donald Lang, Chair**

**Alfred Wojciechowski, Member**

**Rodney Barker, Member**

Voting in the Negative:

**William Roesner, Member**

**Nancy Grissom, Member**

**175 Spiers Road – Demolition Review**

No applicant was present for this item. Staff stated that this 1948 Ranch style residence is located within Oak Hill Park, but not on the path system. The first owners were George and Barbara Neale. George worked as an apprentice carpenter. Dense vegetation surrounds the building making it difficult to see, but it appears that the building has had few exterior alterations aside from replacement windows. The surrounding neighborhood context consists of Oak Hill Park residences largely in original condition, altered Oak Hill Park residences with substantial additions (including adjacent to this property), and some new construction. Commission members discussed the building and neighborhood context. Grissom stated that she felt the neighborhood context had been altered. Grissom motioned to find the building not preferably preserved with Roesner seconding.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on September 26, 2013 the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 5-0,

**RESOLVED** to find the residence at 175 Spiers Road preferably preserved.

Voting in the Affirmative:

**Donald Lang, Chair**

**William Roesner, Member**

**Alfred Wojciechowski, Member**

**Nancy Grissom, Member**

**Rodney Barker, Member**

**237 Park Street – Demolition Review**

Steve Vona on behalf of the property owner presented an application to partially demolish the residence and construct additions. Staff stated that this circa 1860 Greek Revival style home is listed on the National

Register of Historic Places as part of the Farlow and Kenrick Parks Historic District. As it is listed on the National Register, the building is eligible for an 18-month demolition delay. Two owners of note for this property are Jesse Frisbie, a Civil War veteran and surgeon and Edmund Leeds a notable architect in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, who is responsible for one of the additions to the building. The building has had several alterations including replacement siding and windows as well as additions to the side and rear. The L – shaped main block retains its form and massing as well as its slate roof and trim details. Commission members noted the retention of historic details on the building and expressed support for the restoration of the street façade. Grissom motioned to find the building preferably preserved with Roesner seconding, this motion passed.

Vona and the Commission discussed the possibility of issuing a waiver of the demolition delay based upon the proposed concept for constructing additions. The concept included removing later additions to the south façade and rear (west) façade and replacing them with new two-story additions. Grissom noted that the proposed concept included ganged windows which do not exist presently on the building. Abutters expressed concern regarding the potential for removing trees on the property and Vona stated that they were intending to keep as many trees as possible. Lang suggested further developing the fenestration and reorienting the rear addition so that it has parallel gable ends. Wojciechowski motioned to issue an approval for the design direction with Grissom seconding.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on September 26, 2013 the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 5-0,

**RESOLVED** to find the residence at 237 Park Street preferably preserved.

Voting in the Affirmative:

**Donald Lang, Chair**

**William Roesner, Member**

**Alfred Wojciechowski, Member**

**Nancy Grissom, Member**

**Rodney Barker, Member**

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on September 26, 2013 the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 5-0,

**RESOLVED** to issue an approval for the design direction at 237 Park Street as part of a waiver of the demolition delay with the following revisions and resubmittal required: (1) that the fenestration for the rear addition be consistent with the existing fenestration and detailing on the street façade; (2) that the massing and roof slope of the rear addition be changed to two parallel gable ends matching the existing roof pitch with a 6/12 shed roof between them; and (3) that detailed plans with materials information are required for resubmittal and further review by the Commission is required.

Voting in the Affirmative:

**Donald Lang, Chair**

**William Roesner, Member**

**Alfred Wojciechowski, Member**

**Nancy Grissom, Member**

**Rodney Barker, Member**

#### **51 Plainfield Street – Demolition Review**

Armando Petruzzello presented an application for a waiver of the demolition delay based upon plans for a replacement building. Staff stated that this 1922 Dutch Colonial residence is located with the Pine Ridge Road and Plainfield Street National Register Historic District and therefore subject to an 18-month

demolition delay. The district is listed for its architectural significance as an example of a transitional neighborhood with late 19<sup>th</sup> century architectural styles of Queen Anne and Shingle mixing with Colonial Revival, Craftsman and Tudor styles of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The neighborhood is also listed for its association with the development of the village of Waban as a suburban neighborhood accessible to Boston via the train. The building appears to have no substantial alterations and retains its shiplap siding, windows, and wood trim. The building is also consistent in scale and style with others in the neighborhood and is listed as a contributing building to the district. Petruzzello stated that he investigated renovation, but felt that a new building would be preferable. Lang stated that he supported continuing the delay on this property. Wojciechowski suggested that additions could be added that have desirable modern amenities. Petruzzello stated that the design of the proposed building was intended blend with the neighborhood. Isabelle Albeck at 240 Windsor Road also spoke in favor of preserving the building. Wojciechowski motioned to deny a waiver of the demolition delay with Barker seconding.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on September 26, 2013 the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 5-0,

**RESOLVED** to deny a waiver of a demolition delay at 51 Plainfield Street as submitted.

Voting in the Affirmative:

**Donald Lang, Chair**

**Alfred Wojciechowski, Member**

**Nancy Grissom, Member**

**Rodney Barker, Member**

Abstaining from Vote:

**William Roesner, Member**

**Administrative Discussion:**

Minutes

The August 2013 meeting minutes were approved unanimously with Roesner abstaining.

Accessory Building Preservation

Staff presented a draft ordinance for an expedited review regarding the conversion of carriage houses and barns into accessory apartments as a means to incentivize their preservation. Staff further stated that this item will be brought up again for further discussion at a meeting of the Zoning and Planning Committee of the Board of Aldermen.

Meeting adjourned 10:15 PM